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Government Preferences on European Integration: An Empirical Test of Five Theories

MARK ASPINWALL*

This essay examines the causes of government support for European integration. It evaluates several competing theories, both material and ideological. Two dependent variables are examined: government support for European integration in Council of Ministers decisions, and in the 1997 Amsterdam intergovernmental conference. There appear to be sharp differences between the two decision-making fora in the efficacy of predictive variables. In the Council of Ministers, left–right political ideology and financial transfers from the European Union to member states provide the best explanations. In the Amsterdam conference, experience in the Second World War and financial transfers provide the best explanations. This research extends our understanding of why governments choose co-operation within the European Union. It also extends our understanding of the relationship between ideology and integration preferences. Ideology matters not just to parties, but also to governments, which represent both territorial interests and ideologies. There appears to be a linear relationship, whereby left governments are more supportive of integration than right governments.

The purpose of this article is to examine the causes of government preferences on European integration. It tests five competing hypotheses about why governments might support or oppose common policies and institutional strengthening in the European Union (EU), all of which are plausible means of determining government preferences. One of them is ideological – left–right socio-economic position. One is historical – experience in the Second World War. Two are material – trade levels and net receipts from the EU. The fifth is the effect of public opinion.

Locating this essay in the general debate between rationalism and constructivism, the findings support the constructivist interpretation of social interaction.¹ Ideas matter to government preferences. However, it is ideas that stem from domestic politics, not international organizations, that are important. This may be contrasted to Finnemore, who focuses on the ways national interests are defined by international norms.² ‘Interests are not just “out there” waiting to be discovered; they are constructed through social interaction ... states are *socialized* to want certain things by the international society in which they and the people in them live.’ International organizations help shape what states want by the spread of norms and values. She does not believe that examining domestic politics will reveal all the sources of national interests: ‘domestic politics and local conditions cannot explain many of the interests articulated and policy choices made.’³ Political parties, whose programmes and positions are conditioned and constrained by their

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¹ For reviews of this debate, see Peter Katzenstein, Robert Keohane and Stephen Krasner, ‘*International Organization and the Study of World Politics*’, *International Organization*, 52 (1998), 645–85. See also the other contributors to the special issue of *International Organization* in the autumn of 1998. Also see Thomas Risse, ‘Let’s Argue! Communicative Action in World Politics’, *International Organization*, 54 (2000), 1–39; James Fearon and Alexander Wendt, ‘Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View’, in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth Simmons, eds, *Handbook of International Relations* (London: Sage, 2002), pp. 52–72.

² Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996).

³ Both quotes are from Finnemore, *National Interests*, p. 2.

ideologies, have political 'identity'. This identity is transnational in the sense that political ideologies generate similar worldviews across states, but it is also rooted in domestic idiosyncrasies. It often generates a view about whether European integration is appropriate or not. Much recent research has shown a strong correlation between party ideology and integration preferences across member states of the European Union. What I show here is that these correlations may be extended to governments: government preferences are linked to ideology too.

European integration represents an important example of international co-operation, in which states agree to forgo certain types of behaviour in exchange for greater uniformity in behavioural standards, greater certainty and information about the behaviour of other states, the ability to detect and punish defectors, and other gains which reduce the transaction costs of international interaction, thereby permitting greater economic specialization. Understanding the sources of government preferences regarding international co-operation is important because, although it is possible to identify long-term gains from international co-operation, it also brings with it a very real loss of national authority. When states agree to accept binding rules supervised by international organizations, they face a corresponding reduction in their ability to act domestically.⁴ The choice is important for domestic politics because it affects social and economic actors – including political parties, interest groups, social movements and others – in different ways.

One of the most important forms of international co-operation in contemporary life is the integration of the European Union. European integration is contentious precisely because it affects domestic interests in different ways. Ultimately, member states make choices about accepting or rejecting integration on the basis of a calculation of the national interest. Domestic considerations are part of this calculation. In addition, strategic interaction at the EU level, bargaining, trade-offs and an evolution of interests and objectives resulting from a 'constructed' identity are all possible contributing factors. This study tests several domestic factors statistically, using data that are not available for potential international factors. The five I have chosen to examine all represent testable measures of the 'national condition', and they are deductively plausible causes of government preferences on European integration. Scholars have made claims for the importance of others as well, some of which are more difficult to operationalize in a statistical context. These five are operationalizable, but it must be recognized that their selection represents a limit to the generalizability of these findings.

For much of the history of European integration, member states have kept secret their preferences on specific proposals of European integration. This meant that scholars interested in examining preferences had to glean information on an ad hoc basis from insiders.⁵ In the past decade that culture of secrecy has begun to change. There are now sources of data on decisions in the Council of Ministers, provided by the Council Secretariat, which enable analysts to see for themselves how member states vote on legislative proposals put to them.⁶ There is also a survey on interim government positions

⁴ There are exceptions whereby states can have both domestic autonomy and international rules. One is cheating; another is when no pre-existing national rule is curtailed by supranational rules. In general, however, the trade-off is real and significant.

⁵ See, for example, Andrew Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interests and Conventional Statecraft in the European Community', *International Organization*, 45 (1991), 19–56.

⁶ These data are available online at http://ue.eu.int/cms3_applications/showPage.ASP?id=551&lang=en&mode=g. Last accessed on 4 September 2005.

on more than 250 proposals under consideration at the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference. Unusually for European Union politics, a record of these positions was published in a report in 1997 by the European Parliament, providing a rare and empirically valuable insight into the talks on matters ranging from strengthening the powers of the European Parliament to providing a greater role for the European Union in foreign policy.⁷ These two sources of data enable two different measures of the dependent variable – government decisions about international co-operation – to be analysed. Both have been subjected to scrutiny by scholars, but I extend their work in several important respects.⁸

THE SOURCES OF INTEGRATION PREFERENCES

Transactionalist literature leads us to believe that trade (and other forms of interaction) between member states may affect their views about the efficacy of European integration.⁹ The reason is that governments, as rational actors, seek to maximize opportunities for economic actors; that instituting supranational rules helps increase opportunities for economic actors; and that rejecting these rules ‘raises the costs’ to governments. Frieden makes a similar argument: using trade levels as a proxy for private interests, he finds that governments are more willing to engage in exchange rate stabilization as trade rises.¹⁰ Rising trade is measured by the level of trade to EU member states as a percentage of all foreign trade. Given this straightforward relationship, it is quite simple to construct a hypothesis about the relationship between trade and support for European integration:

HYPOTHESIS 1 Support for measures of European integration will vary in direct proportion to the percentage of trade to EU member states. As trade rises, so will support for European integration.

There is on the face of it every reason to expect public opinion to form an important motivating factor in government positions on Europe, since these democracies often have the reputation of carefully following opinion polls and surveys, conducting focus group research to determine optimal policy choice, and ‘spinning’ or ‘contextualizing’ decisions

⁷ See European Parliament, *Positions Résumées des Etats Membres et du Parlement Européen sur la Conférence intergouvernementale de 1996*, JF/bo/290/97, Luxembourg, 12 May 1997. This data source was also used by Simon Hug and Thomas König ‘In View of Ratification: Governmental Preferences and Domestic Constraints at the Amsterdam Intergovernmental Conference’, *International Organization*, 56 (2002), 447–76. To my knowledge similar reports are not available for other intergovernmental conferences. The only version of this report I have been able to locate is published in French.

⁸ Mattila tests the influence of political ideology, financial transfers to member states, the government’s support for integration, member-state voting power, and the presidency on member-state support for Council measures. See Mikko Mattila, ‘Contested Decisions: Empirical Analysis of Voting in the EU Council of Ministers’, *European Journal of Political Research*, 43 (2004), 29–50. My earlier research found a correlation between government ideology and integration preferences in the 1997 Amsterdam IGC. See Mark Aspinwall, ‘Preferring Europe: Ideology and National Preferences on European Integration’, *European Union Politics*, 3 (2001), 81–111.

⁹ Alec Stone Sweet and Wayne Sandholtz, ‘European Integration and Supranational Governance’, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 4 (1997), 297–317. Neil Fligstein and Alec Stone Sweet, ‘Institutionalizing the Treaty of Rome’, in Alec Stone Sweet, Wayne Sandholtz and Neil Fligstein, eds, *The Institutionalization of Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 29–55.

¹⁰ Jeffrey Frieden, ‘Real Sources of European Currency Policy: Sectoral Interests and European Monetary Integration’, *International Organization*, 56 (2002), 831–60. For a related argument, see Jeffrey Frieden and Ronald Rogowski, ‘The Impact of the International Economy on National Policies: An Analytical Overview’, in Robert Keohane and Helen Milner, eds, *Internationalization and Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 25–47.

to maximize public acceptance. However, research on public opinion and European integration is less straightforward than seems to be the case with trade. Major works have addressed the causes of individual support/opposition to integration, including post-material values, cognitive mobilization and economic self-interest.¹¹

Gabel and Palmer find that 'the public forms attitudes that are consistent with their inherent interests in European integration' and they go on to recommend that national politicians and EU officials pay close attention to the different effects of integration on different groups.¹² Gabel looks at the determinants of public support for the European Parliament, finding that the most critical factor is support for EU membership.¹³ Where support for EU membership is high, so is support for the European Parliament. Other factors influencing support for the European Parliament include attachment to democratic values at the EU level, beliefs about the appropriate scope of EU authority, and the extent to which respondents are well informed about the European Union.

But how do we know whether this opinion affects government preferences? Little research suggests a strong 'push' role for public opinion, in which citizens drive integration by influencing government preferences.¹⁴ Wessels suggests that parties are responsible for mobilizing the support of their constituencies on European integration, but also finds that party manifestos reflect the concerns of their voters on Europe. This latter point is echoed by Carrubba, who finds evidence that elites are responding to electoral pressure and weakly-held public preferences over integration.¹⁵ They do not stray far enough from these weak preferences to excite opposition among the public.

Hewstone and Carrubba have measured party positions on Europe, derived from party manifesto data, rather than government positions. Nugent, looking at the British *government*, explains, 'with most voters largely uninterested in, and uninformed about, Community affairs it was inevitable that many should, on the Community issue, tend to follow the lead and reflect the views of their chosen political leaders and parties.'¹⁶ This may be because governments have largely been able to keep their preferences secret from the public.

¹¹ Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); Matthew Gabel, *Interests and Integration: Market Liberalization, Public Opinion, and European Union* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998); Matthew Gabel and Guy Whitten, 'Economic Conditions, Economic Perceptions, and Public Support for European Integration', *Political Behavior*, 19 (1997), 81–96; Richard Eichenberg and Russell Dalton, 'Europeans and the European Community: The Dynamics of Public Support for European Integration', *International Organization*, 47 (1993), 507–34; Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union* (London: Macmillan, 1999); Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, 'Calculation, Community, and Cues: Public Opinion on European Integration' (unpublished manuscript, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 2004).

¹² Matthew Gabel and Harvey Palmer, 'Understanding Variation in Public Support for European Integration', *European Journal of Political Research*, 27 (1995), 3–19.

¹³ Matthew Gabel, 'Public Support for the European Parliament', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41 (2003), 289–308.

¹⁴ For reviews, see Miles Hewstone, *Understanding Attitudes to the European Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 18–20; also Bernhard Wessels, 'Support for Integration: Elite or Mass Driven?' in Oskar Niedermayer and Richard Sinnott, eds, *Public Opinion and Internationalized Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 137–62.

¹⁵ Clifford Carrubba, 'The Electoral Connection in European Union Politics', *Journal of Politics*, 63 (2001), 141–58.

¹⁶ Neill Nugent, 'British Public Opinion and the European Community', in Stephen George, ed., *Britain and the European Community: The Politics of Semi-Detachment* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), pp. 172–201, at p. 191.

However, one interesting study found that the longer the time period following a national election, the more influence a European election is likely to have on the governing parties in the subsequent national election.¹⁷ The reason is that voters appear to use a more recent European election as a 'marker' for the national election rather than a distant prior national election. Therefore, public opinion on Europe (expressed through elections) may have an influence on national politics regarding Europe, because governments will be wary about losing support in European elections and may accommodate public concerns in the run-up to them. Given the expected effect of public opinion in democracies, the hypothesis is as follows:

HYPOTHESIS 2 Support for measures of European integration will vary in direct proportion to levels of public support for the European Union. High public support for the European Union is expected to lead to high support for integration by member-state governments.

Likewise, rising expenditure by the European Union in the member states plausibly raises the costs to governments of rejecting integrative proposals. Carrubba looks at why financial transfers are provided to member states.¹⁸ He finds that they are provided to overcome domestic political repercussions associated with further integration, rather than to alleviate economic need. I take the reverse approach – looking at net financial transfers as an independent variable. Countries that receive high levels of disbursements from the European Union have every incentive to keep the money flowing, and risk interruptions if they obstruct the agreement of common policies or institutional change. Mattila surmises that it may work in reverse: that member states making net contributions may feel they have 'bought themselves more weight' and are entitled to reject integration proposals.¹⁹ However, conventional wisdom is that transfers represent side-payments (to the extent that they are more than developmental tools), buying poor member-state agreement.²⁰ Thus, from this perspective, there should be a positive relationship between EU payments in member states and support for integrative proposals.

HYPOTHESIS 3 Support for measures of European integration will vary in direct proportion to net financial transfers to member states. As net transfers rise, member-state support for integration is also expected to rise.

Historical experience provides a further plausible means of distinguishing between member-state positions on European integration.²¹ Constructing a narrative about what the 'self' means in relation to the 'other' may produce distinct, nationally-based, conceptions of the appropriateness, utility or desirability of European integration. Risse and Marks and Hooghe have shown that exclusive national identity among citizens of EU member states is associated with low support for European integration.²²

¹⁷ Matthew Gabel, 'European Integration, Voters, and National Politics', *West European Politics*, 23 (2000), 52–72.

¹⁸ Clifford Carrubba, 'Net Financial Transfers in the EU: Who Gets What and Why', *Journal of Politics*, 59 (1997), 469–96.

¹⁹ Mattila, 'Contested Decisions', p. 34.

²⁰ Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act'; Carrubba, 'Net Financial Transfers'.

²¹ For a detailed examination of the role of social cognitive structure, discursive formation and identity in Russian foreign policy, see Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002).

²² Thomas Risse, 'The Euro between National and European Identity', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 10 (2003), 487–505; Gary Marks and Liesbet Hooghe, 'National Identity and European Integration: A Multilevel Analysis of Public Opinion' (unpublished paper, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2003).

In much of the literature on Europe, the experience of the Second World War is assumed to be a driving cognitive force behind nationally-specific positions on integration.²³ There is no *a priori* reason why ‘losers’ should be pro-EU and vice versa, but there is a very deeply-held and widespread assumption among both policy makers and scholars that wartime experience powerfully affects attitudes towards integration. In fact, the war provided much of the impetus to set up the original treaties leading to the European Union. Marcussen *et al.* point out that, in Germany, the horrors of Nazism led to a wholesale change in the political culture after the war, whereas in France, a more gradual rethinking of the national role in world politics led to a political realignment of much of the national elite.²⁴

In Britain, the experience of victory produced greater reluctance to be associated with the European project. British negativism towards integration is often associated with the experience of wartime, just as German positivism is associated with the experience of Nazism. In order to reinvent themselves as responsible members of the international community, Axis members and satellites have adopted ‘Europe’ as part of their identity, whereas in Britain this was unnecessary. As Margaret Thatcher (over)stated, ‘All my life, our problems, our wars, have come from mainland Europe. All my life the upholding of liberty has come from the English-speaking peoples of the world.’ It could be argued that focusing on the Second World War experience does not allow for changes in national identity to be observed. *However, it is precisely this fixed historical experience that both politicians and academics often point to in explaining ideational attitudes to integration.*

HYPOTHESIS 4 Support for measures of European integration will vary by member state.
Those states on the ‘losing’ side will be most supportive of integration.
Those on the ‘winning’ side will be least supportive.

Political ideology is the final variable. The ideological beliefs held by politicians and political parties enable them to be placed on the left–right spectrum, because ideology acts as a constraint on the policy positions taken by both individuals and parties.²⁵ For example, it is widely assumed that socialist parties are constrained in the positions they can take on employment and economic growth by the underlying ideology upon which their party is founded. Left–right space does not capture all dimensions of political conflict. Policy dimensions have differing levels of saliency among different states, as Laver and Hunt point out.²⁶ There are diverse perceptions of what the main conflicts are within any given state at any particular time.

Nonetheless, left and right continue to provide a landscape by which we map ideology. New cleavages that have emerged in West European politics get assimilated into the left–right discourse. Left and right help us reduce the transaction costs of understanding the positions of political parties. As Oddbjorn Knutsen writes, ‘the language of “left” and

²³ See Hix, *The Political System*, p. 144. Obviously there are many different contributing factors in historical experience. However, focusing on experience in the Second World War has the advantage of being operationalizable, a task I undertake shortly.

²⁴ Martin Marcussen *et al.* ‘Constructing Europe: The Evolution of French, British and German Nation State Identities’, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 6 (1999), 614–33.

²⁵ Matthew Gabel and John Huber, ‘Putting Parties in Their Place: Inferring Party Left–Right Ideological Positions from Party Manifestos Data’, *American Journal of Political Science*, 44 (2000), 94–103.

²⁶ Michael Laver and Ben Hunt, *Policy and Party Competition* (London: Routledge, 1992).

“right” helps citizens as well as elites to orient themselves in a complex political landscape’.²⁷

The relationship between government ideology and support for integration is complex. The basis for hypothesizing such a relationship lies in research on political parties, which has shown a strong correlation between party ideology and support for (or opposition to) European integration.²⁸ Generalizing somewhat, two broad sets of findings have emerged from research by the ‘Chapel Hill School’. The first is that ideology matters because leftist parties support integration and rightist parties oppose it.²⁹ The reason for greater support among left parties is that as European integration matures, it is less concerned with market opening and deregulation, and more concerned with countering the effects of capitalism. European regulated capitalism is favoured by parties of the left. Gabel and Hix extend this mapping to the EU level, with results largely confirming those found at national level.³⁰ The most significant dimension of party competition on Europe is the traditional socio-economic left–right dimension.

The second finding is that ideology matters because centrist parties are supportive of integration, while support declines as parties move away from the centre. Here the important factor is not whether a party is left or right, but how far from the centre it is. The theorized reason for this relationship is that centrist parties show consistent ideological adherence to orthodox economic openness and stability; leftist parties reject European integration on socialist anti-market grounds; rightist parties reject integration on the grounds of preserving national identity or economic self-determination. Fringe parties on either left or right may oppose the EU’s remote, technocratic, anti-individualist tendencies. Scholars have found empirical support for this approach as well.³¹

Does the relationship between political parties and integration support extend to *governments*? On the face of it, there is no reason to suppose a stable relationship between government ideology and support for integration. Legislative proposals at the EU level may be affected by the extent to which member state governments happen to be left versus right. A particular government may be relatively isolated ideologically, and this may change over time. But given the strong relationship between party ideology and integration support, it

²⁷ Oddbjørn Knutsen, ‘Expert Judgements of the Left–Right Location of Political Parties: A Comparative Longitudinal Study’, *West European Politics*, 21 (1998) 63–94, p. 63. See also Hans-Dieter Klingemann, ‘Party Positions and Voter Orientations’, in Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Dieter Fuchs, eds, *Citizens and the State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Laver and Hunt, *Policy and Party Competition*, chap. 3.

²⁸ See, for example, Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks and Carole Wilson, ‘Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?’ *Comparative Political Studies*, 35 (2002), 965–89; Aspinwall, ‘Preferring Europe’; Simon Hix, ‘Dimensions and Alignments in European Union Politics: Cognitive Constraints and Partisan Responses’, *European Journal of Political Research*, 35 (1999), 69–106; Leonard Ray, ‘Measuring Party Orientations towards European Integration: Results from an Expert Survey’, *European Journal of Political Research*, 36 (1999), 283–306; Gary Marks and Carole Wilson, ‘The Past in the Present: A Cleavage Theory of Party Response to European Integration’, *British Journal of Political Science*, 30 (2000), 433–59.

²⁹ Hooghe *et al.*, ‘Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions?’ This glosses over some nuances. Hix, ‘Dimensions and Alignments’, argues that the situation depends on the member state. Anti-integrationism may be found *either* on the left *or* the right. Marks and Wilson, ‘The Past in the Present’, also examine the variation in party support for integration *within* party families. They find national-specific factors accounting for this variation: for example, social democratic parties differ according to the level of social democracy in place at the national level, and conservative parties differ according to the tension between neoliberalism and nationalism.

³⁰ Matthew Gabel and Simon Hix, ‘Defining the EU Political Space: An Empirical Study of the European Elections Manifestos, 1979–1999’, *Comparative Political Studies*, 35 (2002), 934–64.

³¹ Aspinwall, ‘Preferring Europe’; Marks and Wilson, ‘The Past in the Present’; Ray, ‘Measuring Party Orientations’.

seems sensible to test this empirically for governments as well. The next two hypotheses are designed to determine the answer.

HYPOTHESIS 5 Support for measures of European integration will decline as governments move to the right in left–right ideological space.

HYPOTHESIS 6 Support for measures of European integration will decline as governments move away from the centre in left–right ideological space.

OPERATIONALIZING THE VARIABLES

Dependent Variables

The first six years of publicly available *Council of Ministers* decisions (1994–99) were indexed for each year and each member state to determine the percentage of proposals supported.³² This source is a ‘summary of definitive legislative acts adopted by the Council, together with votes against and abstentions.’ In other words, it includes all acts approved by the Council of Ministers for a given year. It includes different types of acts (such as regulations and directives), made under different decision-making rules (co-decision, co-operation, etc.), and different voting rules (qualified majority and unanimity). Many of the acts were passed without votes against or abstentions by member states, but some did attract opposition.

While this dataset is extremely valuable in showing member state support for various measures under consideration in the Council, it can be difficult to infer support for integration *per se* from the data. There are at least two reasons for this. First, many of the measures are technical in nature, and have no implications for the balance of power between the EU institutions and the member states. Secondly, it is difficult to know which of the measures potentially contravene national interests, and in what ways, without a detailed examination of all of them (more than one thousand altogether), which this study has not sought to do.

Recognizing these inherent limits, it is still worth considering whether the independent variables in this study help explain government choice in the Council. Two approaches are put forward. First, I examine all Council decisions, and take the percentage of decisions supported by each government as the dependent variable (Table 1). Secondly, I examine only those legislative acts for which abstentions or negative votes were recorded (Table 2). The reason for this second approach is the assumption that where states are registering official opposition or abstention it is likelier that national interests are perceived to be at stake, and therefore examining how well domestic factors predict positions should yield different results.³³ The tables show the number of proposals in question and the percentage levels of support by member states in various years.

Coding was as follows: if a government supported a measure in the Council of Ministers, it was given a value of 1. If it abstained, it was given a value of 0.5. If it voted against,

³² See Mikko Mattila and Jan-Erik Lane, ‘Why Unanimity in the Council? A Roll Call Analysis of Council Voting’, *European Union Politics*, 2 (2001), 31–52. I am indebted to the authors for making their data available.

³³ I do not pretend that this is a foolproof way of approximating a policy that contravenes the national interest, but, in the absence of full information on the content of the proposal, it seems a valid way to proceed. It makes sense to concentrate on contentious decisions. No votes and abstentions are indicators of contention, and one of the most important sources of contention are policies that are believed to contravene the national interest.

TABLE 1 *Level of support for Council of Ministers Decisions, 1994–99*

	A	B	D	Dk	E	F	Fin	Gr	I	Ire	L	N	P	S	UK
1994	100.0	96.9	79.7	83.6	90.6	94.5	100.0	93.8	93.0	96.9	93.8	80.5	93.0	100.0	78.9
1995	99.4	99.9	96.9	98.1	99.4	99.6	99.6	99.9	98.4	99.4	99.7	98.3	98.3	90.0	95.8
1996	99.3	98.7	95.0	99.4	98.7	98.8	99.7	99.4	98.1	99.4	99.4	99.1	99.1	99.1	97.2
1997	98.9	99.8	95.5	96.8	98.4	97.7	97.7	98.2	97.1	98.9	99.3	99.1	98.2	96.8	96.2
1998	98.6	97.5	93.3	96.6	97.9	97.9	100.0	98.4	95.9	99.1	99.8	93.1	98.4	98.6	99.1
1999	99.5	99.0	98.7	97.9	99.0	98.4	100.0	99.5	95.5	99.5	99.0	97.6	99.2	100.0	99.2

Notes: This table includes all measures before the Council of Ministers. Number of Council votes: 64 (1994), 344 (1995), 340 (1996), 221 (1997), 218 (1998), 191 (1999). A = Austria, B = Belgium, D = Germany, Dk = Denmark, E = Spain, F = France, Fin = Finland, Gr = Greece, I = Italy, Ire = Ireland, L = Luxembourg, N = Netherlands, P = Portugal, S = Sweden, UK = United Kingdom.

Source: Council Secretariat.

TABLE 2 *Level of Support for Council of Ministers Decisions on Disputed Measures, 1994–2001*

	A	B	D	Dk	E	F	Fin	Gr	I	Ire	L	N	P	S	UK
1994	100.0	96.9	79.7	83.6	90.6	94.5	100.0	93.8	93.0	96.9	93.8	80.5	93.0	100.0	78.9
1995	97.4	99.4	86.5	91.7	97.4	98.1	98.1	99.4	92.9	97.4	98.7	92.3	92.3	55.8	81.4
1996	94.3	87.5	63.6	95.5	90.9	92.0	97.7	95.5	85.2	95.5	97.7	93.2	95.5	90.9	84.1
1997	94.8	99.0	79.2	86.5	94.8	90.6	91.7	91.7	86.5	96.9	96.9	95.8	93.8	85.4	82.3
1998	94.6	90.2	74.1	86.6	92.0	92.9	100.0	94.6	81.3	96.4	98.2	77.7	92.9	94.6	96.4
1999	96.7	93.3	91.7	86.7	93.3	90.0	100.0	96.7	71.7	96.7	93.3	85.0	95.0	100.0	95.0
2000	90.5	83.3	81.0	81.0	100.0	95.2	92.9	85.7	90.5	100.0	100.0	88.1	100.0	90.5	88.1
2001	90.3	91.9	82.3	88.7	87.1	85.5	96.8	96.8	88.7	96.8	96.8	95.2	98.4	87.1	90.3

Notes: This table includes only those measures where there were votes against or abstentions. Number of Council votes: 64 (1994), 78 (1995), 44 (1996), 48 (1997), 56 (1998), 30 (1999), 21 (2000), 31 (2001). See Table 1 for names of member states.

it was given a value of 0.³⁴ The percentage of proposals supported was then calculated for each member state and each year.³⁵ Observations are available for member state voting in the Council from 1994 to 2001 (15 member states times 8 years equals 120), but because of limitations on the independent variables, the *N* in statistical tests is somewhat below that figure. Interestingly, the table shows that the ‘motors of integration’ are somewhat less enthusiastic about Council measures than conventional wisdom would lead us to believe. France is near the bottom of the league table of support, and Germany is in the lower half. Smaller states tend to be most supportive. France is also second from the bottom of the table in support for Amsterdam proposals, with Germany eighth (of fifteen).

Secondly, positions on 135 issues in fourteen areas in the *Amsterdam Intergovernmental Conference* were coded according to whether the government supported the issue or not (see Table 3 for the issue areas). The criterion for accepting an issue for coding was that it represents an increase (or potential increase) in the authority of the European Union. Where new policies would be given a treaty base or where existing policies would be further *communautarized*, they were included. Where the EU institutions were given increased powers, or national authority to veto was potentially eroded, they were included. The trade-off therefore was between supranationalization and national control. This set of criteria excluded institutional ‘streamlining’, and where the effect was uncertain, the issue was excluded.

Coding for the Amsterdam data was similar to the Council data: where the government favoured the adoption of the measure it was given a value of 1. Where it opposed the measure it was given a value of 0. Where it entered a reservation or a partial acceptance, it was given a value of 0.5. If the government had no position then that particular issue

TABLE 3 *Amsterdam IGC Negotiating Areas*

Policy/institutional area	Number of issues
Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)	18
Defence	5
Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)	17
Citizenship	18
Environment	8
Employment	10
New policies	9
Budget	2
Fraud	4
EP	15
Council	4
Commission	4
European Court of Justice and other institutions	14
Subsidiarity, transparency, flexibility	7
Total	135

³⁴ It could be argued that abstentions should also be given a value of zero, since abstaining governments refuse to support a measure. However, the intent is to create categorical distinctions based on real behavioural differences, and it is assumed that abstaining does not represent as strong an objection as voting against.

³⁵ This yields an annual index of support for European integration in the Council of Ministers. Mattila’s approach, by contrast, is to count the number of no votes and abstentions in six-month periods.

TABLE 4 *Government Positions in Fourteen Amsterdam Areas, with Aggregates*

	A	B	Dk	Fi	F	D	Gr	Ire	I	L	N	P	Sp	Sw	UK
CFSP	64	81	32	38	35	61	64	25	77	81	82	54	69	30	14
Def	20	100	67	20	80	80	50	13	80	100	90	40	80	30	0
JHA	81	79	38	96	69	81	96	86	86	77	77	65	80	71	24
Cit	94	88	50	88	77	89	93	58	93	79	92	90	86	55	34
Env	71	100	86	80	67	85	80	100	100	83	100	75	75	86	80
Emp	100	100	100	100	60	75	100	100	100	100	88	100	96	100	69
New	63	75	20	17	25	40	80	67	89	17	0	83	38	20	0
Budget	0	100	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	0	0	50	0	50	0
Fraud	100	75	100	33	50	50	100	100	100	75	100	100	100	100	100
EP	50	75	70	33	14	67	92	63	78	56	67	38	71	50	0
Council	25	75	17	44	31	50	50	38	100	75	63	63	17	50	0
Comm	67	100	0	0	0	33	67	67	50	75	100	38	0	0	0
Misc	100	83	100	57	25	79	100	50	33	78	75	58	86	70	25
Flex	79	92	70	80	20	100	75	83	95	75	100	100	57	71	0
External	50	86	39	33	47	66	60	21	78	86	84	50	72	30	11
Internal	83	87	60	73	60	73	93	84	93	72	75	78	75	68	37
All pol	76	87	55	61	57	71	85	68	89	76	78	71	74	59	30
Inst	71	84	57	45	18	68	81	61	69	70	79	57	65	51	6
All	74	86	54	57	47	70	84	66	84	74	78	67	71	56	23

Note: Figures represent the percentage of proposals in each area that the government supported. External policies = CFSP and defence. Internal policies = JHA, citizenship, environment, employment, new policies, budget and fraud. Institutions = EP, Council, Commission, miscellaneous institutions, and flexibility. See Table 1 for names of member states.

was removed from the *N* for that government. For each of the fourteen policy and institutional areas a value of between 0 and 1 was obtained by calculating the mean of positions in that area. Aggregate means were also calculated for external policies, internal policies, all policies, institutional change and all issues together. Those member states with values closest to 1.0 were most supportive of integration; those with values closest to zero were least supportive.

Table 4 shows the percentage of proposals each government was willing to support. Belgium supported 86 per cent of proposals, and Britain supported 23 per cent. The strikingly low level of support by the British government may be due to the party management problems John Major faced during this period and the fact that Britain had recently concluded a policy of 'non-cooperation' because of its opposition to the export ban on British beef. Within certain areas Britain's support was high – for example, the British government backed 80 per cent of the environmental proposals and 100 per cent of the fraud proposals. In general, however, the list corresponds with the putative rank of 'Europhile' and 'Eurosceptic' member state, although some countries with strongly pro-European reputations, such as Luxembourg, Germany and Ireland, show less support for the Amsterdam proposals than might be expected.

Independent Variables

The next step is to operationalize the independent variables. The *Trade* variable is simply exports to fellow EU member states, as a percentage of all exports. *Public opinion* measures

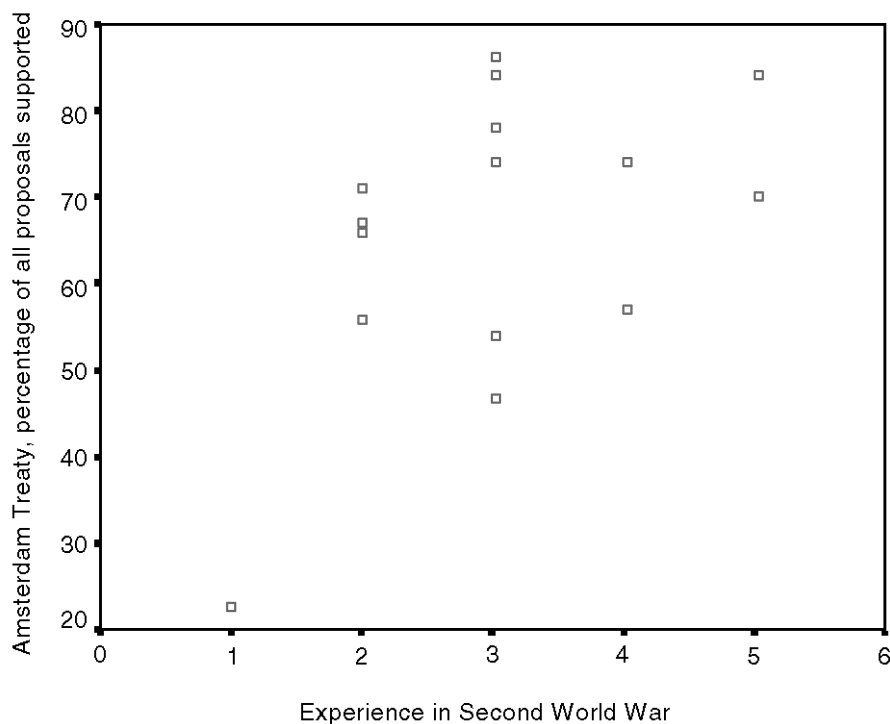


Fig. 1. Scatterplot of status in the Second World War and support for Amsterdam proposals
X axis key: 1 = Allied power, 2 = neutral, 3 = occupied, 4 = Axis satellite, 5 = Axis power.

belief in the benefits of EU membership, as reported in Eurobarometer. *Net financial payments to member states* is available on the official EU website.³⁶ It is calculated as net payments as a percentage of gross national product (GNP) to control for effect on the economy. Experience during the Second World War is calculated by placing states in one of five categories – allied power, neutral, occupied, axis satellite and axis power. Map 11, ‘Europe at the Height of Hitler’s Power’, in Paul Kennedy’s *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, is used as the source.³⁷ This glosses over some nuances, such as the difference between ‘neutral’ Spain and neutral Sweden. Also, for the purposes of this study, Austria is assumed to be an axis satellite rather than part of greater Germany (and therefore part of the axis powers).

A scatterplot in Figure 1 suggests that support for Amsterdam proposals rises as one moves from ‘winning’ to ‘losing’ states in the Second World War. It is true that much of this apparent relationship is driven by the outlier status of Britain, and the level of correlation declines when it is removed from the analysis. Likewise, in regression analysis, the Second World War status is weaker with Britain removed. Second World War deaths

³⁶ Commission of the European Communities, *Allocation of 2000 EU Operating Expenditure by Member State*, Budget Directorate General, Brussels, 2001. See also http://europa.eu.int/comm/budget/agenda2000/reports_en.htm (last accessed on 4 September 2005).

³⁷ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987), p. 351.

are another means of approximating the effect of the conflict on the national consciousness, and so military and civilian deaths per capita are employed as an alternative variable here.³⁸

Deciding how to calculate *Government ideology* presents us with some problems, and the remainder of this section is devoted to solving them. I begin with a measure of party ideology. There are several means of determining the left–right placement of political parties (I use two of them), and at least three ways of converting *party* ideology into *government* ideology, because the exact measure of government ideology is debatable. Laver and Schofield provide an overview of the various studies that had been conducted to that point on measuring party ideology, and they enumerate four specific methods of determining party placement: expert survey, legislative behaviour, mass survey data, and content of policy documents.³⁹ I use the first and last, because of their relative reliability and availability.

Expert surveys have the advantage of relying on several local experts, who are asked to place parties in left–right space. They have been criticized, but they are widely believed to have utility in determining independently the ideological location of political parties, and I use three of these surveys here.⁴⁰ The first was conducted in 1983 by Francis Castles and Peter Mair, and the second was conducted in 1992 by John Huber and Ronald Inglehart.⁴¹ They were supplemented and updated by a survey conducted by Gary Marks and Marco Steenbergen.⁴²

The second means of determining party ideology is by comparing party manifesto content. This provides more consistent data, extending from 1945 to 1998 in a large database assembled by Ian Budge and his collaborators.⁴³ There are fifty-six specific policy categories, which these researchers used to place each sentence of each party manifesto for these years, where the manifestos were available. However, there are also

³⁸ Most of this information was obtained from I.C.B. Dear, ed., *Oxford Companion to the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). Population information was obtained from the UN Population Division. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the *Harper Collins Atlas of the Second World War* were used for Denmark and Spain respectively. These latter two figures were obtained from the following website: <http://users.erols.com/mwhite28/warstat2.htm> (last accessed on 4 September 2005).

³⁹ Michael Laver and Norman Schofield, *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 245.

⁴⁰ For critiques, see Ian Budge, 'Theory and Measurement of Party Positions', in Ian Budge, Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Andrea Volkens, Judith Bara and Eric Tanenbaum, eds, *Mapping Policy Preferences: Estimates for Parties, Electors, and Governments, 1945–1998* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 75–90, at p. 75; Michael McDonald and Silvia Mendes, 'Checking the Party Policy Estimates: Convergent Validity', in Budge *et al.*, eds, *Mapping Policy Preferences*, pp. 127–41; Laver and Schofield, *Multiparty Government*; Ian Budge, 'Expert Judgements of Party Policy Positions: Uses and Limitations in Political Research', *European Journal of Political Research*, 37 (2000), 103–13. On the other hand, Powell uses expert surveys of party ideology in his landmark study. See G. Bingham Powell, *Elections as Instruments of Democracy* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000). Moreover, in a highly regarded examination of the use of *manifesto* data for determining left–right party positions, Gabel and Huber, 'Putting Parties in their Place', use *expert surveys* as the critical standard; they cite the close correlation between the various expert surveys and refer to the widespread use of them as reasons to accept their underlying validity.

⁴¹ Francis Castles and Peter Mair, 'Left–Right Political Scales: Some "Expert Judgements"', *European Journal of Political Research*, 12 (1984), 73–88; John Huber and Ronald Inglehart, 'Expert Interpretations of Party Space and Party Location in 42 Societies', *Party Politics*, 1 (1995), 73–111.

⁴² Hooghe *et al.*, 'Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions?'; Gary Marks and Marco Steenbergen, eds, *European Integration and Political Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁴³ Budge *et al.*, eds, *Mapping Policy Preferences*.

problems in using manifesto data to place parties in an ideological space, since parties may be using manifestos not for the purpose of ideological differentiation but to maximize the saliency to voters of issues most associated with the party. Moreover, it is difficult to know which of the several dozen policy issues to choose when determining the left–right ‘meta dimension’ or ‘super dimension.’⁴⁴

I also make use of the manifesto data in this study to place parties in left–right space. Budge and his collaborators devised a formula for determining the left–right location from their data on specific policy categories. They do this by subtracting the left content of manifestos from the right content of manifestos. But this requires them to make a judgement on which categories are left, which are right, and which are neither and should be left out. Their selection of manifesto categories may be criticized. On the one hand, it is unclear why certain policy positions are associated with only one side of the spectrum, such as favourable statements about constitutionalism for right parties, and favourable mention of peaceful settlements with left parties. On the other hand, they leave policy positions out that should arguably be associated with one side of the spectrum or the other. For example, statements in favour of corporatism, Keynesian demand management, Marxist economic analysis and social justice should on the face of it be associated with the left side of the equation, but they are not. Likewise, negative statements about labour groups should plausibly be associated with right parties, but the Budge schema does not do so.

Therefore, I do not use their selection of manifesto categories to determine left–right location. Instead I select thirty manifesto categories (thirteen right and seventeen left), and compute ideological location by subtracting left from right in the same manner as Budge and colleagues. Why these thirty categories? They were chosen because the literature suggests (1) that these policy positions are clearly either left or right, and (2) that there is a correlation between them and position on European integration. Socialists (those who believe in Keynesian economic policies and redistribution) are widely believed to have opposed European integration because of its market orientation. Those adhering to national symbols are also linked in the literature to anti-integrationist sentiments because of their belief that integration erodes national identity and power. It is important to note that no external policy issues (with the arguable exception of support for military spending) are included in the recalculated left–right scale. The reason for leaving them out is to avoid any possible circular influence on integration preferences. Determining party ideology using the policy categories I have chosen yields a closer correlation to party preferences on integration than using the policy categories chosen by Budge *et al.* (see Table 5). Given the extremely robust findings of a link between party ideology and integration support, this is a further reason it seems to make sense to use these selected categories to calculate government ideology.

Thus, because there is no *a priori* reason to assume the superiority of either expert surveys or manifesto data for determining ideology, I use both methods. The level of covariation between the manifesto left–right positions and the left–right positions derived from expert surveys is not as high as one might expect given that they are purporting to

⁴⁴ Most scholars either adopt a specific and clear view about what the policy content of left–right space is (i.e., economic intervention v. free enterprise) or they assume that ideology constrains parties’ positioning such that there are logical connections between a party’s position on various different policy issues. See Gabel and Huber, ‘Putting Parties in Their Place’.

TABLE 5 *Party Ideology Correlated with Party Preference on EU Integration*

Dependent variables – party preferences on EU integration	Independent variables – manifesto data			
	Left–right placement from Budge policy categories	Distance from centre from Budge policy categories	Left–right placement from Aspinwall policy categories	Distance from centre from Aspinwall policy categories
Expert survey (N = 436)	0.138**	– 0.278**	0.265**	– 0.452**
Manifesto (N = 1,991)	0.008	– 0.164**	0.046*	– 0.152**

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

measure the same thing.⁴⁵ It would seem that expert judgements of party ideology and party manifesto measures are not measuring parties by the same yardstick, which is no bad thing, since it gives us two relatively independent (of each other) explanatory variables. Both the expert survey method and the manifesto method of determining party ideology produce a value on a scale from 1 to 100. Since I am interested not simply in a linear left–right space but also in the effect of moving from the centre to the extremes, I calculate a new variable which measures political party ideology as a function of its distance from the centre of left–right space (non-centrism).⁴⁶

The relationship between party ideology and party support for integration is now widely accepted, and has been shown in numerous empirical studies to have validity across time and member state.⁴⁷ The purpose here is to extend our understanding of this relationship from *party* ideology to *government* ideology. In doing so it is necessary to interpolate government ideology values for years where there are no data. The manifesto party ideology measure is available only for election years, while the expert survey data are available only at irregular intervals.⁴⁸ Party ideology measures are completed by

⁴⁵ The R value is 0.399 ($N = 234$, significant at the 0.01 level). A further test is to examine the relationship between the manifesto variable on European Community support and the expert survey results from Ray, ‘Measuring Party Orientations’, on the level of support for integration for each party. The results show some relationship between the two variables ($R = 0.442$). The nearest election data were used to compare party integration preferences from the expert survey, and the percentage of statements in favour of European integration derived from the Budge dataset. Where the Ray expert survey data fell exactly between two elections, the previous manifesto data were used. Though statistically significant at the 0.01 level, it would seem that experts were not thinking of party manifesto statements alone when they made their judgements as to a party’s position on European integration.

⁴⁶ Interestingly, a simple bivariate correlation between the expert survey measure of non-centrism and an expert survey measure of party support for integration yields a correlation of -0.772 , significant at the 0.01 level ($N = 671$). The relationship is negative, as expected: the more non-centrist a party, the less it supports European integration. Using the same left–right data as the independent variable without converting it to distance from centre yields a correlation of only 0.156. In other words, as far as the expert survey measure of parties is concerned, what seems to matter is not whether a party is left or right but how far it is from the political centre.

⁴⁷ Hooghe *et al.*, ‘Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions?’; Ray, ‘Measuring Party Orientations’; Aspinwall, ‘Preferring Europe’.

⁴⁸ It is also important to note that there are some differences between the datasets in terms of parties covered. The Marks/Steenbergen expert survey is more comprehensive in terms of contemporary parties, including smaller regional, extremist, single-issue and movement parties that are absent from the Budge dataset. In practice this should not affect outcomes since these parties were not present in governing coalitions.

TABLE 6 *Multivariate Regression Models*

	Dependent variables				
	Council of Ministers 1994-99		Amsterdam IGC		
Manifesto Left-right position	-0.529*** (0.143)	-	-	-0.388 (0.716)	-
Manifesto non-centrism position	-	-0.209 (0.146)	-	-0.269 (0.597)	-
Expert survey Left-right position	-	-	-0.034 (0.062)	-	-0.379 (0.231)
Expert survey Non-centrism position	-	-	-	0.003 (0.076)	-0.212 (0.331)
Export levels to EU	0.127 (0.127)	0.235 (0.147)	0.240 (0.124)	0.838 (0.585)	1.441 (0.765)
Public opinion on benefits of EU membership	-0.032 (0.082)	-0.044 (0.084)	-0.077 (0.080)	-0.106 (0.072)	0.969 (0.456)
Net payments to member states	1.420 (0.832)	1.732* (0.842)	1.956* (0.880)	-0.372 (0.405)	-0.360 (0.311)
Second World War II	-0.049 (0.935)	0.682 (0.973)	-0.135 (0.927)	7.698 (3.790)	6.458 (3.393)
R ²	0.340***	0.221**	0.161*	0.701	0.692*
N	59	68	75	12	15

Notes: The manifesto and expert survey items are lagged one year. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Unstandardized beta coefficients reported. Standard errors in parentheses. Variance in N due to availability of data on independent variables.

interpolation and, using Woldendorp *et al.*'s data on government composition, government ideology values are extracted from these interpolations.⁴⁹ Information is included for both the French president and the French government, because of the former's importance in foreign policy. Finally, the government ideology scores are lagged by one year. Many of the elections occurred well into a given year, with governments taking office late in the year or even in the following year, and it is reasonable to assume that the effects on policy would be delayed slightly.

FINDINGS

Support for European Integration in the Council of Ministers

Bivariate correlation analysis shows several important patterns. First, information on government ideology from the manifesto database provided a better correlate of support for these Council proposals than the expert surveys. Secondly, knowing the position of governments in linear left–right space provided a stronger correlate than knowing its distance from the centre of left–right space.⁵⁰ Appendix Table A1 shows the bivariate correlations. Thirdly, trade and public opinion were only modestly correlated to Council positions. However, they do correlate to each other to some extent.⁵¹ The level of net disbursements to member states correlates to positions in the Council ($R = 0.361$), and even more strongly to public opinion about the benefits of the European Union ($R = 0.659$).

With this information, a multivariate regression model was constructed using the five explanatory variables (see Table 6). Ideological position is statistically significant for one of the model specifications – manifesto-derived position in left–right space. The relationship is negative: government support for integration declines as it moves from left to right. This supports the hypothesis predicting a linear relationship (Hypothesis 5). A stepwise regression removes all variables except government ideology. When expert survey-derived government ideology is used instead of manifesto, the variables net transfers, trade and public opinion are the significant ones, and the rest excluded. The result is very important for our understanding of the causes of government positions, because it demonstrates the predictive importance of government ideology as measured by manifesto statements. Interestingly, although the linearity of this relationship is similar to that reported by Mattila, my results show that the manifesto-derived ideology measure is a stronger predictor than the expert survey-derived measure. Mattila only examines an expert survey-derived measure.⁵²

Net payments to member states is significant in all the models (though the error term is high), and there is a positive relationship: as payments increase, so does support for Council decisions. In other words, controlling for other variables, EU payments have a

⁴⁹ Jaap Woldendorp, Hans Keman and Ian Budge, 'Party Government in 20 Democracies', *European Journal of Political Research*, special issue, 24 (1993), 1–119; Jaap Woldendorp, Hans Keman and Ian Budge, 'Party Government in 20 Democracies – An Update (1990–1995)', *European Journal of Political Research*, 33 (1998), 125–64.

⁵⁰ Bivariate correlation between manifesto-derived government left–right ideology and support for Council measures was the highest of all the independent variables ($R = -0.515$, sig. 0.001).

⁵¹ Trade and public opinion were correlated to Council decisions at 0.263 and 0.217 respectively, both significant at 0.05, $N = 92$. Lagging the trade data by a year reduces its correlation to Council decisions. The bivariate trade–public opinion correlation is 0.396, significant at 0.01, $N = 89$.

⁵² Mattila 'Contested Decisions'.

strong influence on government support for measures in the Council of Ministers. This result is at odds with Mattila's findings, in which net payments to member states are not significant. He surmises that high covariance between this variable and the variable of government support for integration may be the reason net payments fall out in regression analysis. Member states that have high levels of net receipts also have governments highly supportive of integration.

In my analysis, trade is also positively correlated, as expected, but the level of significance is low in all but one model. The hypothesis that trade linkages may promote positive government preferences towards integration is not supported by the evidence. The public opinion variable shows a negative relationship, the opposite of what we expected, though the coefficient is very low and the relationship is not significant. Experience in the Second World War appears to have no influence on government support for Council measures. Whatever the claims of analysts who ascribe integration support to wartime experience, these data do not support such a link. Using Second World War deaths instead of Second World War status increases the R^2 to 0.444 for the full model, but the variable Second World War deaths is not significant as a variable itself.

Interestingly, these independent variables are less successful at predicting government positions on *all* Council measures (instead of just those where negative votes or abstentions were recorded). The significance level is far lower, meaning that the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable is more likely to be random. This may be because the former (i.e., all Council measures) were less contested and therefore less subject to differences in national preferences. Many of these measures are technical, uncontroversial housekeeping acts with no significance for national interests. In any case, variables measuring differences in domestic circumstances are more powerful predictors where Council decisions are contentious.

Support for European Integration in the Amsterdam IGC Negotiations

Turning to the Amsterdam IGC positions, a different pattern emerges. First, expert survey-derived information on the ideology of governments is a better correlate than the manifesto-derived ideology, the reverse of the case for Council of Ministers. Secondly, knowing the government's ideological distance from the centre of left–right space is not as good a correlate of Amsterdam positions as knowing its position in linear left–right space (although some of the correlations are very close). Thirdly, Second World War experience is also a good correlate to government positions in the Amsterdam negotiations. Second World War 'losers' are more likely to support integration than 'winners'. Net transfers and public opinion are somewhat weaker correlates, and trade is not correlated to Amsterdam positions in a statistically significant way. Appendix Table A2 shows bivariate correlations. All the significance levels are lower than for the Council of Ministers data because of the lower N (16) for the Amsterdam negotiations. The number of observations equals one per member state government, plus one for the French president, an important decision maker in foreign policy matters.

Multivariate regression models were constructed to test the explanatory power of ideology, trade, net payments, Second World War experience, and public opinion on member states' positions on the Amsterdam negotiations (see Table 6). None of the ideological variables are statistically significant. Interestingly, Second World War experience and net payments show a far stronger relationship to government positions than ideology, though the error term is very high. Second World War experience is the only

variable that achieves statistical significance. However, removing the outlying United Kingdom from the dataset reduces this significance, and reduces the explanatory value of the full model. British negativism plays a large part in driving this relationship. Using Second World War deaths in place of Second World War experience does not increase the predictive value of this model. Trade also appears to predict government positions: the higher the levels of trade with EU partners, the more likely it is that governments will support integration. The relationship between public opinion and government positions again appears to be negative: the less supportive public opinion is, the more supportive governments are. However, the population of cases is very small, unfortunately, and this weakens the significance of the results.

UNDERSTANDING GOVERNMENT PREFERENCES ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

One of the most striking findings of this study appears to be that different factors affect government choice in Council of Ministers and IGC deliberations. Party ideologies translate to government positions when considering Council decisions. This issue is important because most theories of government preference formation downplay ideological competition in favour of explanations focusing on specific national interests.⁵³ However, other potential means of representing the national interest – especially net receipts of EU funds and national experience in Second World War – yield some evidence that governments are abandoning ideological views when they choose policies on Europe. This is especially the case in the IGC leading to the Amsterdam Treaty.

Why is there a difference in the ability of independent variables to explain the decisions of the Council of Ministers versus the IGC? Bearing in mind that these results are tentative, one possible reason is that the Amsterdam negotiations, like all IGCs, are higher profile and likely to attract greater media and public scrutiny than the more workaday Council voting. If this is the case, governments may be more careful to represent the ‘national interest’ in IGCs, whereas they are more likely to be motivated by ideological predispositions when their efforts are subject to less external scrutiny. This could explain the high significance of the ‘Second World War experience’ variable. The media exposure guaranteed by major intergovernmental conferences may cause leaders to act as guardians of history and tradition, conforming to the view of many academics and policy makers that historical experience is essential to understanding government preferences.

However, it could be that the difference between the two results may be explained by the different types of proposals being considered – ‘high politics’ in the IGC and ‘low politics’ in the Council. In an earlier paper I showed that foreign policy and defence issues in the Amsterdam IGC were affected by traditional member state concerns, such as neutrality and international power.⁵⁴ Even member states that were highly supportive of most Amsterdam proposals rejected foreign policy and defence strengthening in some cases. Conversely, ‘low politics’ issues at Amsterdam, such as employment policy, are more easily explained by government ideology than by Second World War experience (I treat this in more detail below). In other words, some transfer of authority is contested

⁵³ See Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach’, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 31 (1993), 473–524; Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998); Sandholtz and Stone Sweet, ‘European Integration and Supranational Governance’.

⁵⁴ Aspinwall, ‘Preferring Europe’.

on ideological grounds, while other transfer of authority is contested on territorial grounds.⁵⁵ Further process-tracing case studies may reveal the answers to these questions more fully.

A further puzzle concerns the dimensionality of ideological influence on government policy in the Council. Specifically, why do governments not display the same 'inverted U-curve' of support/opposition to integration that parties display? Distance from centre appears to be less important to governments than their location in linear left–right space. Both ideological hypotheses predict downward sloping support for integration as one moves from the centre to the right. The difference between them is on the left of the ideological spectrum. The non-centrist (inverted U-curve) hypothesis predicts that support for Europe will decline as one moves left. The linear hypothesis predicts that support for Europe will increase as one moves left.

One possibility is that far-left parties, which are hostile to integration and which are necessary to making the inverted U-curve work, are not exerting an influence on governments, either because they are not part of government coalitions or because they are a weak influence as outsiders. Additionally, it is possible that governments have been influenced by the 'new-left' social democracy agenda, which is generally favourable to integration, at least partly because the European agenda includes market-correcting regulatory policies such as employment and environmental policies. The high support for these policies among left of centre governments is evidence of such an effect.⁵⁶

However, left–right ideology may be disaggregated into two dimensions. One is the socio-economic dimension: economic interventionism versus economic liberalism. The other is a liberties dimension: personal liberty versus moral traditionalism.⁵⁷ Taking the economic dimension first, left governments would be expected to support European integration as the EU moved from being a market-oriented space to one in which 'regulated capitalism' was pursued, through redistributive policies, including cohesion, environmental, employment and other policies designed to tame the excesses of market liberalism. Conversely, right governments would oppose integration under these conditions for the same reasons. Redistributive policies would interfere with the free working of the market, reducing aggregate welfare.

On the liberties dimension, left governments are expected to oppose interference in personal lifestyle choices, such as abortion rights, same sex marriage and adoption rights, and other quality of life issues. The European Union has tended to promote a liberal policy agenda of equal rights which would be favoured by left governments on this ideological spectrum. Right governments favour moral traditionalism in which 'appropriate' standards of behaviour are delineated. It is not clear *a priori* that it is necessary for the state to take a role in promulgating and enforcing those standards. This role could be played by churches, communities or families. But in practice it would appear that state authority is strongly associated with this ideology, so that right governments support state authority because it can delineate the proper limits to personal liberties.

⁵⁵ For a more detailed discussion of these two dimensions, see Gary Marks, 'European Integration and Political Conflict', in Gary Marks and Marco Steenbergen, eds, *European Integration and Political Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 235–59.

⁵⁶ Hooghe *et al.*, 'Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions'.

⁵⁷ For application of these ideological approaches to party views on Europe, see Hooghe *et al.*, 'Does Left/Right Structure Party Position?'. For application to British MPs' views on Europe, see Mark Aspinwall, 'Commons Sense: British MP Attitudes to European Integration' (unpublished, Edinburgh University, 2005).

Taking these two elements of left–right space together, left governments would favour integration as the European Union moved into market-correcting economic policies and extended its agenda of equal rights and liberal freedoms. Right governments would favour integration as the European Union moved towards economic liberalism and market freedoms, and provided scope for member states to exercise domestic power in lifestyle areas. In practice, right governments may be critical of Europe not simply because of its move away from market liberalization but also because it robs the state of autonomy. Left governments may be supportive of Europe both because it has provided new policy areas with which to counter full market liberalization and also because it enshrines a liberal ethos of personal freedoms and equalities.

Measures of party ideology along the new politics and economic dimensions are both weak predictors of preferences on EU integration.⁵⁸ When these are translated into government ideological measures (in the same manner as before), they also appear to be weak predictors of government choice on both the Amsterdam Treaty and Council of Ministers decisions. But are they better predictors of more refined decision making, on ‘new politics’ areas, such as environmental policy, and economic areas, such as employment policy? I discuss this in more detail in the next section.

EXPLAINING SUPPORT FOR REGULATED CAPITALISM

In this section I consider more refined policy and institutional preferences in the Amsterdam Treaty: employment policy, environmental policy and strengthening the European Parliament. The first two areas fall into what is often called ‘regulated capitalism’, which refers to market-correcting policies designed to overcome inequities or externalities due to market liberalization.

One plausible determining factor in government preferences on these measures is the size of the welfare state.⁵⁹ Member states with high levels of taxation as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) will take a different view of the efficacy of integration depending on how it affects their own circumstances.⁶⁰ Governments with high welfare state expenditure levels may resist market-opening measures and social policy measures which reduce their ability to provide public services. Likewise, states with high welfare state expenditure may support regulated capitalism at the European level because it increases their competitiveness *vis-à-vis* other member states. If this is true, we can expect support for measures of European integration to vary according to welfare state levels, measured by taxation as a percentage of GDP.

Results suggest that welfare state levels show no correlation to member state decisions in the Council. Moreover, welfare state spending does not add to our understanding of why governments support employment policies or institutional strengthening proposals in the Amsterdam Treaty. However, there is a significant relationship between welfare state spending and support for environmental policies – namely that high spending states are *less* inclined to support environmental policies, but there are too few cases to draw any firm conclusions here. What else may be affecting government choice? Linear left–right

⁵⁸ Regressing party economic ideology (from manifesto data) on party integration preferences (from survey data) yields $R^2 = 0.054$, sig. $p < 0.001$. Similarly, new politics ideology and party integration preferences yields $R^2 = 0.018$, sig. $p < 0.01$ ($N = 435$).

⁵⁹ Welfare state levels are simply calculated from data on taxation as a percentage of GDP, available on the OECD website.

⁶⁰ Hix, *The Political System*.

TABLE 7 *Regulated Capitalism/European Parliament Models*

	Amsterdam positions, employment policies	Amsterdam positions, environment policies	Amsterdam positions, strengthening EP
Left-right position, from expert survey data	- 0.878** (0.219)	- 0.794** (0.180)	- 1.543* (0.483)
Export levels to EU	0.547 (0.353)	0.268 (0.379)	1.704 (1.016)
Public opinion on benefits of EU membership	- 0.373 (0.241)	0.194 (0.240)	- 0.174 (0.643)
Disbursements to member states	3.527 (3.581)	- 7.413 (3.081)	5.151 (8.254)
Welfare state	- 0.320 (0.671)	- 1.762* (0.634)	- 2.044 (1.700)
Second World War II experience	- 0.223 (2.674)	- 1.130 (0.929)	1.901 (2.490)
R^2 full model	0.805*	0.829	0.799
N	16	16	16

Notes: Left-right position is lagged one year. For employment policies, status in the Second World War better predicts decisions; for the environment and the European Parliament, Second World War deaths better predicts positions. Significance: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$. Beta coefficients reported. Standard errors in parentheses.

position is an extremely reliable predictor of government support for strengthening common employment and environmental policies (see Table 7). Unsurprisingly, left governments support employment and environmental policies, while right governments oppose them. Controlling for trade levels and public opinion only reduces the predictive power by a small amount. This confirms the empirical findings of Hooghe *et al.* on European political party positions regarding European regulated capitalism measures. Manifesto-derived positions are not as strong. Distance from the ideological centre also helps us predict positions on employment policies, but not with as much confidence as left-right position. What is perhaps most remarkable is that a highly significant and strong relationship is possible with sample size of only sixteen.

However, not all ideological measures are good predictors. Substituting new politics and economic ideology measures in place of the broader left-right measure actually reduces the predictive power greatly. Moreover, substituting public opinion on the need for EU employment policies in place of general public approval of the European Union actually reduces the explanatory power of the model, and is less significant than the broader opinion measures. Finally, levels of disbursement from the European Union are only mildly

correlated to support for employment policies at Amsterdam, and actually reduce the explanatory value of government ideology in the full regression model.

Ideology is also the most important explanatory variable in positions on strengthening the European Parliament and strengthening environmental policy. More refined measures of public opinion do not increase the predictive power, nor do the new politics and economic ideology variables. However, ideology is not a good predictor of all Amsterdam policy areas. None of the ideological measures constructed here help us predict positions on justice and home affairs, Common Foreign and Security Policy or defence policies.

Why are some Amsterdam proposals explained by ideology while others are not? One way to answer this question is by looking more closely at public opinion. The public opinion variable used in the multivariate regression model is a broad indicator of the perceived benefits of EU membership to citizens of member states. However, there are more refined data on public opinion. Citizens were polled in early 1997 on their support for EU policies in defence, foreign policy, immigration, asylum, environment, employment and strengthening the European Parliament. Because this was at the same time that interim government positions were recorded by the EP, it is worth looking for relationships between these more refined public opinion variables and government preferences.

Table 8 reports the findings of simple bivariate correlations between public opinion and government position in the Amsterdam negotiations. Little relationship exists except in the areas of defence and foreign policy. Using these variables in the multivariate models does little to improve their predictive power. Except in the case of defence, ideology is still a better predictor than public opinion. European citizens polled by Eurobarometer show a strong correlation in views on defence to the positions taken by member state governments. The relationship is slightly weaker for foreign policy, and for other policy areas and strengthening the European Parliament, the relationship is very weak. This may be due to a strong coincidence of popular and elite views about the historically appropriate and

TABLE 8 *Public Opinion and Government Positions on Amsterdam*

		Government positions					
		Defence	Foreign policy	JHA	Environ	Employ	EP
Public opinion on EU measures	Defence	0.797**					
	Foreign policy		0.504*				
	Asylum			0.318			
	Immigration			0.278			
	Environment				0.159		
	Employment					0.014	
	EP						0.262

Notes: Correlation coefficients (*R*) are reported in the table. *N* = 16. Significance: **p* < 0.05, ***p* < 0.01.

efficient locus of military power. Foreign and defence policy are less likely to generate conflict *within* than *between* member states.⁶¹ Table 4 makes clear that the traditional neutral states (Sweden, Finland, Austria and Ireland) opposed much of the defence agenda at Amsterdam, despite their support for integration in other areas. Strong foreign policy powers such as Britain and France also resisted integration in the foreign policy area, possibly because of their independent powers and status in this area.

CONCLUSION

This article has compared two versions of government choice on Europe: an intergovernmental conference and decisions in the Council of Ministers. It found marked differences in predictability; government ideology and financial transfers are the best predictors in the Council; Second World War experience and financial transfers are the best predictors in the Amsterdam IGC. It has extended Aspinwall on the Amsterdam IGC, and Mattila on the Council, and most importantly, provided a means of comparing different decision-making fora. It has not considered the possible effects of inter-state bargaining or strategic interaction on government preferences. The flow of causality is from the domestic arena upwards. This has enabled a robust statistical analysis to be performed, but also limits the significance of the findings to domestic factors alone.

In terms of the influence of ideology, this article enables us to extend research done on political *party* support for European integration: namely, in the case of *government* policy choice in the Council of Ministers, leftists choose co-operation, rightists choose autonomy. The reason for this is likely to be the turn towards market-correcting policies by the European Union, including cohesion, employment and environmental policies. It may also be caused by the pro-liberal freedoms and rights agenda of the European Union and the loss of sovereignty faced by member states, which is particularly problematic for rightist governments. The article also suggests that we may reject the hypothesis that ideological *non-centrism* matters to governments' positions on integration.

One final point may be made about how this research corresponds to existing literature on ideology and integration preferences. It concerns the conclusion drawn by Gary Marks about the differences between parties and governments.⁶² Marks characterizes patterns of contestation in two dimensions. One dimension captures the level of difference in *domestic* distributional impact of an EU policy. The other dimension captures the level of difference in *inter-country* distributional impact. He goes on to suggest that parties see European integration through an ideological prism, and respond to it on that basis. Governments, because they mobilize territorial interests, are more likely to respond to distributions of power among the member states, and also between member states and the European Union itself.

However, the data examined here imply that the distinction between parties and governments is not as sharp as one might think. Governments, like parties, respond in an ideological manner to policy decisions in the Council of Ministers, but not always in an ideological manner to policy decisions in the IGC, where territorial shifts in competences, such as foreign and defence policy, may be more likely. Governments are made up of parties, who appear to bring their ideological predispositions to government policy choice. Governments represent both territory and ideology.

⁶¹ Marks, 'European Integration and Political Conflict'.

⁶² Marks, 'European Integration and Political Conflict'.

APPENDIX

TABLE A1 *Council of Ministers Correlations*

	Percentage of Council measures supported	Govt left-right ideology, manifesto	Govt non-centrism ideology, manifesto	Govt left-right ideology, expert survey	Govt non-centrism ideology, expert survey	Net transfers	Public opinion on EU benefits	Trade level	Second World War experience	Second World War deaths
Percentage of Council measures supported	1 (95)	-0.503*** (60)	-0.306** (74)	-0.062 (75)	-0.129 (90)	0.292** (92)	0.217* (92)	0.263* (92)	-0.164 (95)	-0.193 (77)
Govt left-right ideology, manifesto	1 (62)	1	0.389** (55)	0.523*** (61)	0.162 (61)	-0.226 (60)	-0.192 (60)	-0.116 (61)	0.157 (60)	0.323* (46)
Govt non-centrism ideology, manifesto		1 (335)	1	0.216 (54)	0.410*** (232)	-0.252* (71)	-0.167 (71)	-0.346*** (303)	0.358** (74)	0.321* (60)
Govt left-right ideology, expert survey				1 (89)	0.487*** (89)	-0.114 (75)	-0.034 (75)	0.021 (87)	0.004 (75)	-0.034 (60)
Govt non-centrism ideology, expert survey					1	-0.359*** (87)	-0.339*** (87)	-0.295*** (256)	-0.029 (90)	-0.465*** (72)
Net transfers						1 (92)	0.632*** (92)	0.138 (89)	-0.356** (92)	0.162 (75)
Public opinion on EU benefits							1 (92)	0.396*** (89)	-0.117 (92)	-0.045 (75)
Trade level								1 (337)	-0.274** (92)	-0.404*** (74)
Second World War experience									1 (95)	0.555*** (77)
Second World War deaths										1 (77)

Notes: Values shown are Pearson correlation coefficients, with N in parentheses below each value. Correlation is significant (2-tailed): *at the 0.05 level, **at the 0.01 level, ***at the 0.001 level.

TABLE A2 *Amsterdam Correlations*

	Amsterdam Treaty, all proposals	Govt left-right ideology, manifesto	Govt non-centrism ideology, manifesto	Govt left-right ideology, expert survey	Govt non-centrism ideology, expert survey	Net transfers	Public opinion on EU benefits	Trade level	Second World War experience	Second World War deaths
Amsterdam Treaty, all proposals	1 (16)	-0.230 (12)	-0.242 (12)	-0.573* (15)	-0.493 (15)	0.205 (16)	0.242 (16)	0.275 (16)	0.482 (16)	0.296 (13)
Govt left-right ideology, manifesto		1 (62)	0.389** (55)	0.523*** (61)	0.162 (61)	-0.226 (60)	-0.192 (60)	-0.116 (61)	0.157 (60)	0.323* (46)
Govt non-centrism ideology, manifesto			1 (335)	0.216 (54)	0.410*** (232)	-0.252* (71)	-0.167 (71)	-0.346*** (303)	0.358** (74)	0.321* (60)
Govt left-right ideology, expert survey				1 (89)	0.487*** (89)	-0.114 (75)	-0.034 (75)	0.021 (87)	0.004 (75)	-0.034 (60)
Govt non-centrism ideology, expert survey					1 (267)	-0.359*** (87)	-0.339*** (87)	-0.295*** (256)	-0.029 (90)	-0.465*** (72)
Net transfers						1 (92)	0.632** (92)	0.138 (89)	-0.356** (92)	0.162 (75)
Public opinion on EU benefits							1 (92)	0.396*** (89)	-0.117 (92)	-0.045 (75)
Trade level								1 (337)	-0.274** (92)	-0.404*** (74)
Second World War experience									1 (95)	0.555*** (77)
Second World War deaths										1 (77)

Notes: Values shown are Pearson correlation coefficients, with N in parentheses below each value. Correlation is significant (2-tailed): *at the 0.05 level, **at the 0.01 level, ***at the 0.001 level.